

INFORMATION REPORT

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SUBJECT Organization of State Retail Stores in Krakow
Availability of Food and Personal Items

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

1. "The following information on consumer goods in Krakow dates through mid-Dec 53.
State Stores
2. "The nationalized State Stores with outlets throughout Poland include:
 - (a) Miejski Handel Detaliczny (State Retail Trade - MHD)
 - (b) Powszechna Spoldzielnia Spozycow (General Food Cooperatives - PSS)
 - (c) Spoldzielnia Pracy (Work Cooperatives); Punkt Uslugowy (Sales Outlet)
 - (d) Powszechny Dom Towarowy (Assorted Goods Store - PDI)

SEE LAST PAGE FOR SUBJECT & AREA CODES

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- (e) Centralny Zarząd Przemysłu (Central Administration of the Meat Industry); Miejski Handel Mięsem (State Butcher Stores - MHM)
- (f) Centralny Zarząd Przemysłu Mleczarskiego (Central Administration of the Milk Industry); e.g. Krakowskie Zakłady Mleczarskie (Krakow Dairies - KZM) mid-Dec 5.
- (g) Krakowskie Zakłady Gastronomiczne (Krakow Gastronomic Enterprises - KZG)
- (h) Centrala Rybna (Fish Center - CR)
- (i) Centrala Odzieżowa (Clothing Center - CO)
- (j) Centralny Zarząd Przemysłu Skórzanego (Central Directorate of the Hides Industry - CZPSkorz.)
- (k) Centrala Handlowa Przemysłu Ludowego i Artystycznego (Central Trade of Farmers' Art Products [sic] - CHAIA)
- (l) Centrala Przemysłu Naftowego (Center of the Petroleum Industry - CPN)
- (m) Centrala Aptek i Polecznych (Central Drug Stores - CA)
- (n) Centrala Tekstylna (Textile Center - CT)
- (o) Centrala Handlowa Materiałów Budowlanych (Trade Center for Construction Materials - CHMB)

Availability of Consumer Goods

3. Meat, fat and soap ration cards were withdrawn in Poland Dec 5. Nevertheless, certain food commodities continue in short supply. Meat distribution is disorganized: some days one city sector will have veal, another will have beef; other days there will be only beef or no meat at all. In autumn 1953 prices were lowered 10-15%, except for meat, fat, butter, milk, fruits and vegetables -- thus the essential foods were not affected.
4. "Almost all food commodities can be bought on the black market at high prices. Meat is also sold on the black market, but its sale is sharply prohibited and punishable by law. What black market meat is sold usually passes in the following way: a woman walking around the vegetable market will murmur 'Meat' from time to time to people passing -- people that do not look suspect. She does not carry the meat. She makes the bargain -- price, quantity, quality. An associate standing by watches for her signal and produces the meat. The black marketeers know the police officers so well that they disappear when any come in sight.
5. "Clothing items cannot be specially ordered at the State stores. If something doesn't fit or is defective (e.g. shoes), it cannot be exchanged. Items of good quality can only be found in the Miejski Handel Detaliczny Sklep Komisowy (Commission Stores). People who receive parcels from abroad sell things there. The prices are fantastic: a Western lipstick might cost 220 zł.; a lady's pullover 1000 zł.; a silk blouse 600 zł. The State Stores do not stock good sewing cotton. Private stores may carry good thread, but at four times the normal price. A State Store may have black thread; but then it will have no white.

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6. "Wrist watches, typewriters, and sewing machines are only available secondhand at Commission Stores.

Food Prices in Krakow

7. "The following prices were current in Krakow in mid-Dec 53:

Item	Quantity	Where Available	Private Store	Black Market	State Store
			Prices	Prices	Prices
--- (in zloty) ---					
Bread (Chleb Zytni)	1 kg	MHD, PSS, PDT			3. 21
Bread (Chleb Naloczewski)	1 kg	MHD, PSS, PDT			4. 21
Bread (Chleb Pezennorazowy)	1 kg	MHD, PSS, PDT			4. 21
White Bread (Chleb pszenny)	1 kg	MHD, PSS, PDT			---
Bulki (round bread)	piece	MHD, PSS, PDT			0.60 z1
Bulki (specjalne)	piece	MHD, PSS, PDT			0.80 z1

Note: Other types of bread are available in private stores at higher prices. When there is no bread for sale in the State Stores, people line up at the private stores, where the prices naturally go higher. No bread is on sale on Sunday. Bread and 'bulki swykle' can also be bought in the vegetable markets.

Beef (mięso wołowe)	1 kg	MHM, PDT	Not available in private stores	15. - 20. z1	
Pork (mięso wieprzowe)	1 kg	MHM, PDT	Not available in private stores	20. - 30. z1	
Veal (mięso cielęce)	1 kg	MHM, PDT	Not available in private stores	20. - 30. z1	
Sausage (kielbasa)	1 kg	MHM, PDT, MHD, PSS	Not available in private stores	45.-70. z1	15.-60. z1
Ham (szynka)	1 kg	MHM, PDT, MHD, PSS	Not available in private stores	60. - 80. z1	50. - 60. z1
Liver sausage (watrebianka)	1 kg	MHM, PDT, MHD, PSS	Not available in private stores		22. 21
Lard (slenina)	1 kg	MHM, MHD, PSS, PDT	Not available in private stores		40. 21
Pork fat (Tłuszcz wieprzowy)	1 kg	MHD, MHM, PSS, PDT	Not available in private stores		40. 21
Poultry (ptactwo)	1 kg	MHD, MHM, PSS, PDT	Not available in private stores		40. 21

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Note: There are frequent shortages of lard and pork fat in the State stores. The meat in the State stores is usually not fresh, and there is no choice. People who can afford to shop on the black market do so. The poultry in the State stores does not look fresh. Fresh poultry is available in the vegetable markets, where it is brought in alive or freshly killed by the farmers. This poultry is naturally expensive. No private stores sell meat openly, but I know of some in Krakow that do so secretly to old reliable customers. Many of the MHD stores sell horse meat.

Item	Quantity	Where Available	Private Store Prices	Black Market Prices	State Store Prices
Butter (maslo)	1 kg	MHD, PSS, PDI, KZM	75.-85. zl	60.-75. zl	61.50 zl
Eggs (jajko)	each	MHD, PSS, PDI, KZM	1.30-1.50 zl	1.20-1.30 zl	1.15 zl
Cheese (ser)	1 kg	MHD, PSS, PDI, KZM		32. zl	30.-45. zl
Milk (mleko)	1 liter	MHD, PSS, PDI, KZM		2. zl	1.50 zl
Cream (smietana)	1 liter	MHD, PSS, PDI, KZM	24.-25. zl	20.-24. zl	23. zl

Note: butter, milk, eggs, cheese and cream are on sale in private shops and the vegetable markets. The difference in price from State stores is little except during shortages at the latter. Milk and cream are sold on Sunday from 0600 through 1000 hrs. The cream in State stores is good.

White flour (maka Pszenna)	1 kg	MHD, PSS, PDI			5.-8. zl
Sugar (cukier)	1 kg	MHD, PSS, PDI			15.75 zl
Semolina (gryzik)	1 kg	MHD, PSS, PDI			
Rice (ryz)	1 kg	MHD, PSS, PDI			
Margarine (ceres)	1 kg	MHD, PSS, PDI			
Olive Oil (olej prawdziwy)	1 liter	MHD, PSS, PDI	240. zl		
Sunflower oil (olej lniany)	1 liter	MHD, PSS, PDI			

Note: When sugar and flour are on sale in State stores, the portions per purchaser are limited. Sugar and flour may be bought at higher prices in private shops by persons known to the shopkeeper to be reliable; private stores are legally forbidden to sell sugar and flour.

Pepper (piperz)	1 kg		600.-700.-zl	600.-700.-zl	
Coffee (kawa)	1 kg	MHD, PSS, PDI	450.-600.-zl	450.-550.-zl	350.- zl
Cocoa (kakao)	1 kg	MHD, PSS, PDI	400.-500.- zl	350.-450.-zl	350.-350.-zl

Note: The above items are mostly sold in private shops; they are seldom available in the State Stores, and when available they are immediately sold. People will rarely buy one kilo of pepper or two kilos of coffee. First, they are too expensive; secondly such quantities are not on sale. To buy those amounts one must contact a 'good friend' through the black market - otherwise suspicion is aroused.

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Item	Quantity	Where Available	Private Store Prices	Black Market Prices	State Store Prices
Potatoes (ziemniaki)	1 kg.	MHD, PSS	1.50 z1	1.10 z1	0.60 0.70 z1
Apples (jablka)	1 kg	MHD, PSS	8.-15z1	6.-11.-z1	7.-15.-z1
Pears (Gruszk)	1 kg	MHD, PSS	15.-18.-z1	- 14.- z1	10.-18.-z1
Lemons (cytryny)	each	MHD, PSS	7.-12.-z1	6.-11.-z1	- 30.-z1
Oranges (pomaranche)	-----	not seen during 1953-----	might be in black markets-----		
Bananas	-----	not seen since 1939-----			
Grapes (winogrona)	1 kg	MHD, PSS			15.- z1
Onion (cebula)	1 kg	MHD, PSS			2.50 3.20 z1
Garlic (czosnek)	single	MHD, PSS	1.-1.50 z1	1.-1.50 z1	
Carrots (marchew)	1 kg	MHD, PSS	4.- z1	3.-3.50 z1	2.- 4.- z1
Tomatoes (pomidory)	1 kg	MHD, PSS	2.50-7.-z1	2.-7.- z1	2.50-6.- z1
Cucumbers (ogorki)	1 kg	MHD, PSS	2.-8.- z1	1.50-6.50 z1	1.20-6.- z1

Note: Fruits and vegetables are almost more expensive in State Stores than in the vegetable markets; at the markets, furthermore, the fruits and vegetables are fresh and there is a good selection. Fruits and vegetables are also on sale at State mobile pushcarts in the streets. Lemons are seldom available in State Stores. They must be purchased in private stores, where they are sold one at a time. There are no bananas. Grapes were on sale in 1953 for approximately two weeks at 15 z1. per kilo.

Candy (cukierki)	1 kg	MHD, PSS, PDT			14.-56.-z1
Chocolate candy (pomadki)	1 kg	MHD, PSS, PLT			45.-110.-z1
Chocolate tablet (czekolada tabliczki)	100 grams	MHD, PSS, PDT			15.-18.- z1

Note: There are few private candy stores. Their candy is far more expensive than in the State Stores, but also far better.

Fruit-wine (wine owocowe)	1 ltr	PSS, PMS			18.-56.- z1
Alcohol (spirytus)	1 ltr	PSS, PMS			120.- z1
Vodka (wodka)	1 ltr	PSS, PMS			60.- z1
Liquers (likier)	1 litre	PSS, PMS			70.-140.-z1

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Note: I've never heard of any shortage of alcohol, brandy or wine. A greater sale takes place when rumors of a monetary reform or a price increase begin to spread. At such times people naturally buy up everything. The last 'panic' which I recall took place in Krakow during Oct or Nov 1953. It was a Saturday afternoon. Everything was sold out in the State Stores including sugar, brandy, soap and flour. There were rumors of a monetary reform or a price increase. At 2100 hrs (same evening) the radio station announced a general lowering of prices. A similar type of 'panic' occurs in Poland two or three times yearly. At the beginning, people used to take this seriously, but slowly people get used to anything.

Item	Quantity	Where Available	Private Store Prices	Black Market Prices	State Store Prices
Fish (ryby)	1 kg	PDT, CR, MHD, PSS			20.- 30.- zl
Canned fish	1 package	PDT, CR, MHD, PSS			4.50 zl
Sardines (sardynki)	1 package	PDT, CR, MHD, PSS	60.- 80.- zl		

Note: In the Fish Center salted 'sea' fish is also available but it is not much liked by the Poles. There is little selection in fish; the cases in Krakow are usually empty.

8. Cigarettes

"There are various types of cigarettes:

Item	Quantity	Where Available	Private Store Prices	Black Market Prices	State Store Prices
Wawel	25 cigs.	MHD, PSS, PDT, PMT			11.- zl
Poznanek	12 cigs.	MHD, PSS, PDT, PMT			3.60 zl
Sukot	12 cigs.	MHD, PSS, PDT, PMT			3.60 zl
Balweder	20 cigs.	MHD, PSS, PDT, PMT			7.80 zl
Wozasowe	20 cigs.	MHD, PSS, PDT, PMT			2.80 zl
Sporty	20 cigs.	MHD, PSS, PDT, PMT			--

Note: There are short periods of time when the better quality cigarettes are not available - but these are very short periods. Private shops do NOT sell cigarettes. Cigarettes are also sold on the street by the Union of Disabled Veterans (Spoldzielnia Inwalidow).

9. Catering

"Hotels, wine taverns, restaurants and nightclubs are administered by the Krakowskie Zaklady Gastronomiczne (Gastronomic Enterprises). Half the dishes on the menu are usually 'not available'.

10. Clothing

"The following prices were current in Krakow in mid-Dec 53:

Item	Quantity	Where Available	Private Store Prices	Black Market Prices	State Store Prices
Lady's under- wear (bielizna damska)	1 set	MHD, PSS, CT, CO, PDT			100.- 250.- zl
Shirt (koszula mowska)	each	MHD, PSS, CT, CO, PDT			40.- 200.- zl
Stockings (ponczochy damskie)	pair	MHD, PSS, CT, CO, PDT			30.- 180.- zl

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Item	Quantity	Where Available	Private Store Prices	Black Market Prices	State Store Prices
Socks (skarpety moskie)	pair	MHD,PSS,CT,CO,PDT			14.- 30.-zł
Lady's coat (plaszcz damski)	each	MHD,PSS,CT,CO,PDT			500.-2.800.-zł
Man's coat (plaszcz moski)	each	MHD,PSS,CT,CO,PDT			600.-2.800.-zł
Silk blouse (bluska damska)	each	MHD,PSS,CT,CO,PDT	360.- 580.-zł		60.- 200.-zł
Woolen blouse (bluzka wełn)	each	MHD,PSS,CT,CO,PDT	500.- 700.-zł		300.- 600.-zł
Woolen pullover (swetr wełn)	each	MHD,PSS,CT,CO,PDT	600.-1200.-zł		600.- 800.-zł
Cotton pullover (swetr bawełna)	each	MHD,PSS,CT,CO,PDT			100.- 180.-zł
Necktie (men)	each	MHD,PSS,CT,CO,PDT	40.- 120.-zł		18.- 70.-zł
Ladies leather 'half' shoes (obuwie damskie)	pair	MHD,PSS,CO,CZPS & PDT	660.-1800.-zł		300.- 800.-zł
Man's leather shoes (obuwie moski)	pair	MHD,PSS,CO,CZPS & PDT	700.-1400.-zł		360.- 700.-zł
Woolen material (materiał wełniany)	1 meter	MHD,PSS,CO,CT,PDT	900.-2000.-zł		500.-1400.-zł
Woolen material for clothing	1 meter	MHD,PSS,CO,CT,PDT	400.- 900.-zł		380.- 700.-zł
Woolen knitting yarn	1 kg	only available in private shops	600.-2000.-zł		
Elastic stockings (gumien elastick) (guma gumowy)	each	only available in private shops and PDT	300.- 700.-zł		
Silk material (materiał jedwabny)	1 meter	MHD,PSS,CT,CO			40.- 150.-zł
Bed linen (pościel)	1 meter	MHD,PSS,CT,CO			40.- 150.-zł

Note: Throughout the State Stores, the readymade clothes for men, women and children are of low quality and badly finished. Often one sleeve may be longer than the other; pockets are sewn in at a bad angle. There is a fault in almost any item. A wide choice is out of the question. One must buy what one can find.

Elegant, beautiful things can be seen only in the 'Komis' Stores. They are extremely expensive and there is little choice. These goods are items sent to Poles from abroad and resold by them in the 'Komis' Stores. For example, a woman may see in a 'Komis' Store a nylon blouse for a large person, rosy colored. Should she wear that size and like the color, she can have it for 660 zł. (a month's salary for a clerk) since it is the only one available.

The situation is similar with fur coats. Furs are very expensive, and there is little choice. A so-called 'Bobermantel' (half-fur) costs about 5000 zł. in a private shop and is hard to find. I have seen a second hand fur coat (popielica) in a 'Komis' Store priced at 7,000 zł. Bed linen is rarely available in State Stores. There is always a long queue. There are queues for household goods (kitchen goods, pots, glasses, forks, etc.). (Such household prices are unknown to me, as I was never able to buy such items.)

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Work Cooperative - Punkty Usługowe

11. "Cooperatives of shoemakers, tailors and barbers have been established. A pair of shoes can be ordered in a shoemakers' cooperative. In a private shop, one pair of shoes costs 1,200.- up to 1,800 Zloty.. Private shoemakers buy leather on the black market. Private shoemakers do not get a distribution of leather for shoe repairs.

Shoe Repair Prices (Cooperatives):

<u>Item</u>	<u>Prices</u>
Mens' shoes (soles and heels)	40.- 70.- z1
Ladies' shoes (soles and heels)	40.- 60.-z1
Childrens' shoes (soles and heels)	30.- 40.- z1

12. "Suits are tailored in Tailors' Cooperatives. The customer may provide the material or buy it at the Cooperative itself.

Tailoring with own material (Cooperative prices):

<u>Item</u>	<u>Prices</u>
Lady's coat (including linen and tailoring)	600.- 800.- z1
Lady's 'tailleur' (including linen and tailoring)	500.- 800.- z1
Lady's dress (including linen and tailoring)	150.- 250.- z1

13. "Hairdressers and Barbers

<u>Item</u>	<u>Private</u>	<u>Cooperative Price</u>
Cold wave	150.- z1	135.- z1
Shampoo	18.-z1	16.- z1
Normal set	40.- z1	30.- 35.- z1
Manicure	4.- z1	3.- 4.- z1
Dyeing	-	-

14. "All Punkty Usługowe are divided into three categories, the first category being the most expensive, but I cannot give the difference between the prices of the categories."

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